

BLM ALASKA FRONTIERS

Issue 107 • Summer 2009

News about BLM's National System of Public Lands in Alaska

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From the managing editor
Credits

BLM-Alaska Receives Stimulus Money



Sean Carlson

National Trails Day volunteers rehabilitate a popular trailhead on the BLM Campbell Tract in Anchorage. BLM-Alaska received \$1.4 million for future trail maintenance and construction in Alaska.

BLM-Alaska received \$37.4 million as its share of stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) stimulus package. Alaska's share of the recovery funds will go toward habitat restoration, remediation of old well and mining sites, maintenance and upgrade of roads, recreation trails, facilities, and capital improvement projects that include renewable energy upgrades.

Alaska State Director Tom Lonnie said, "Much of the money will be spent in rural communities, which will help our state's economy while improving facilities, including recreation facilities, used by the public. We intend to start on these projects as soon as possible. Some projects should begin later this summer after going through the competitive bid, grant or agreement processes."

BLM-Alaska's ARRA statewide coordinator Nancy Beres says vendors and contractors will have the opportunity to bid competitively on ARRA-related projects. Several projects will create short-term jobs for students. BLM-Alaska will employ youth from rural Alaska villages or from the Student Conservation Association and AmeriCorps to work on trail maintenance and Iditarod National Historic Trail safety shelter projects.



Track available grant opportunities when they open at <http://www.grants.gov>. Find information on BLM-Alaska's stimulus projects at <http://www.recovery.gov>.

Alaska



Celebrating 100 Years 1912-2012

Historic Iditarod Centennial goes to the Fair!



This year, the BLM and the Iditarod National Historic Trail Centennial partners, including the Chugach National Forest and the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance, will give Alaska State Fair visitors a special glimpse into Alaska's history from August 27 to September 7.

To commemorate the centennial, the Wineck Barn at the State Fairgrounds in Palmer will feature an interactive exhibit that will tell the story of the historic Iditarod Trail and its rich history.

"Themes encompassing the trail, its stories, and stewardship will explore the past, present and future of the trail," explains Judy Bittner, President of the Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance. "We'll offer fascinating details about the trail's history, activities for Iditarod enthusiasts of all ages, and ways you can get involved in helping to celebrate the trail's Centennial."

Last year, nearly 300,000 guests attended the fair.

— Teresa McPherson
Teresa_McPherson@blm.gov



Historic Wineck Barn

If you would like to join the Centennial effort or get more information, visit <http://www.iditarod100.org> or <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sa/iditarod.html>.

Teresa McPherson



FEDERAL LAND MANAGER AWARD

BLM Anchorage District Manager Gary Reimer

Anchorage District Manager Gary Reimer is the recipient of the Take Pride in America® 2009 Federal Land Manager Award, in recognition of the district's successful and innovative Take Pride partnership programs and events during 2008. The awards honor federal land managers for their approaches to recruiting volunteers and cultivating their volunteer and partnership programs. In addition to Reimer's award for the BLM, five other Take Pride "federal land manager" awards went to managers at the Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service. The national awards ceremony will be at the U.S. Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C., on July 17.

Reimer explains, "These partnerships are key to the way we manage public lands. We have a great BLM team and many diligent partners who work together



Reimer

Teresa McPherson

flawlessly to accomplish so much year after year."

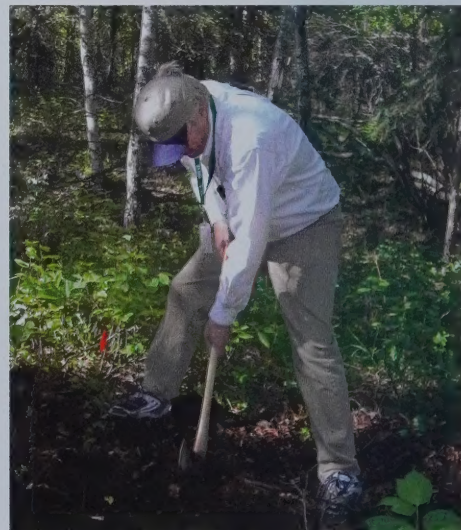
With Reimer at the helm, the Anchorage District hosted Winter Trails Day, National Trails Day, and two major National Public Lands Day events. Partners include REI, the Municipality of Anchorage, volunteer organizations such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, faith-based organizations, high school service clubs, volunteers, and other partner organizations.

"I'm proud of the success of our Take Pride partners and programs ..." – Gary Reimer

Take Pride in America acting Executive Director Lisa Young announced the 15 National Award recipients in 10 different categories. "It is an incredible privilege to honor this outstanding group of award winners," she said. "They each embody the mission of the Take Pride in America program, and are examples to us all of what it means to be good stewards of our public lands." She adds, "This is one way we can say, 'Thank you!' for the work they have done."

Take Pride in America's national partnership program was authorized by Congress to promote the appreciation and stewardship of public lands. This includes trails, parks, forests, and historic sites. The program is active in all 50 states and includes partnerships with numerous public, private, and nonprofit organizations.

— Teresa McPherson
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Gary Reimer lends a hand at trail building on National Trails Day on the BLM's Campbell Tract.

Teresa McPherson

What's Happening with BLM-Alaska Land Use Planning?

BLM TO AMEND LAND USE PLAN FOR HAINES BLOCK LANDS IN SOUTHEAST



Takhishna Mountains, BLM- managed public lands in foreground with Glacier Bay National Park in the background, southwest of Haines.

The BLM Anchorage Field Office is working on a Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for lands in the Haines Block of the Ring of Fire planning area.

The Record of Decision for the Ring of Fire RMP, released in March 2008, deferred the final determination on the establishment of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) for Haines Block lands. A re-evaluation of the ACEC criteria will be considered in an amendment to the plan. The amendment will also consider whether to retain the Haines Block Special Recreation Management Area designation in the Record of Decision.

Within the Haines block, the BLM administers approximately 321,000 acres. The major issue in this planning effort relates to potential impacts on wildlife populations from recreation in the planning area.

The Ring of Fire Amendment will be created through an open public process using input from those interested in the public lands and the surrounding communities. The BLM held public scoping meetings to identify relevant issues during the 90-day scoping period in Haines, Skagway and Anchorage, before scoping ended on June 24, 2009. The BLM expects to have the scoping report available this fall.

If you'd like to be added to the mail list for this planning effort, contact the BLM Anchorage Field Office at (907) 267-1246 or toll free at (800) 478-1263 (within Alaska).

—Beth Maclean

beth_maclean@blm.gov

Find information on land use planning at
<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning.html>

Eastern Interior RMP

BLM-Alaska expects to release the Draft Eastern Interior RMP/EIS in Fiscal Year 2010, with a Record of Decision likely in Fiscal Year 2011.

Planners are working on Alternatives and Affected Environment for the Eastern Interior RMP, including mineral occurrences and the socio-economic sections for the EIS. The BLM completed an Alternative Workshop during the week of April 27, 2009.

The Eastern Interior RMP Scoping Report is now complete and available at: http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning/east_int_rmp/Documents.html.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks is preparing a report on climate change for the Eastern Interior planning area.

East Alaska RMP: Environmental Assessment Amendment

On April 10, 2008, the Federal Register published BLM-Alaska's Notice of Intent to amend the East Alaska RMP, including the Delta River Special Recreation Management Area. The public scoping period ended September 15, 2008. The scoping report is at http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sa/delta_nwsr/Delta_River_Planning.html.

Geothermal Leasing

In December 2008, the BLM and the Forest Service national offices jointly issued a Record of Decision and Approved RMP Amendments for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States that affects programs and lands managed by both agencies.

The Record of Decision amended BLM land use plans nationwide, including three BLM-Alaska RMPs: Ring of Fire, Kobuk-Seward Peninsula and Central Yukon. The BLM can now go forward with geothermal leasing for lands identified in the document as having geothermal energy potential. BLM-Alaska will address geothermal leasing in future land use plans.

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/newsroom/2008/december/NR_12_18_2008.html



50 Years Fighting Fires in Alaska

Editor's Note: We featured "Fighting Fires from the Sky" in BLM-Alaska Frontiers Spring 2009 (Issue 106), but we are following up on the smokejumpers 50th anniversary celebration.

The BLM Alaska Smokejumpers, a branch of the Alaska Fire Service, are celebrating their 50th Anniversary this year, coinciding with Alaska's induction to statehood in 1959. Smokejumpers are among Alaska's primary wildland fire initial attack resources, battling wildfires in remote and populated

areas of Alaska and the western United States.

On Friday, June 5, the Alaska smokejumper crew welcomed to Fairbanks more than 200 retired and active smokejumpers, their families, friends and members of the public to help them celebrate. Throughout the afternoon, attendees toured the smokejumper base at Fort Wainwright and enjoyed audiovisual presentations that highlighted the unique history of the Alaska smokejumpers. The jump base fire-call siren blared twice, sending visitors and active smokejumpers rushing to the suit-up racks. Cheers went up as current, on-call smokejumpers donned their heavy jumpsuits before flying off to battle Interior wildland fires burning near McGrath.

Visitors hiked through the woods to watch a training jump on Birch Hill. Eight smokejumpers parachuted into the "Big Spot," again to enthusiastic applause from the celebrants and media representatives on hand.

On Friday evening, the crew hosted "the largest smokejumper camp ever assembled," according to Smokejumper Base Manager Bill Cramer, at the Chena Lake Recreation Area. Early in the evening, eight smokejumpers made a train-

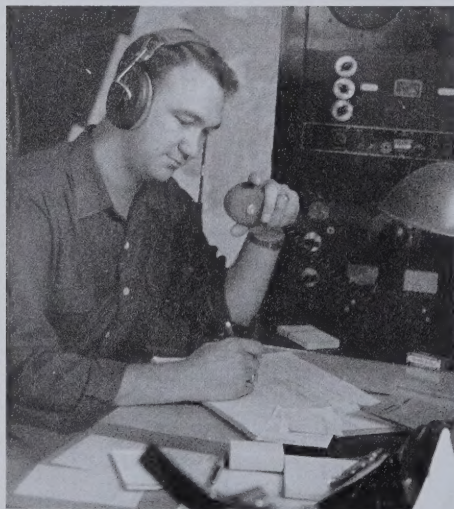
ing jump into a clearing near the main camp, to the delight of dozens of children present, and festivities continued past midnight.

Several paracargo canopies and campfires dotted the shores of a small lake at the site, offering celebrants plenty of room to seek relief from intermittent rain showers. The camp's centerpiece was a huge, green, 64-foot paracargo canopy that stretched high above several fire pits and provided shelter when skies turned wet.

Barbequed pigs and more than 20 turkeys were on the dinner menu. After dinner, BLM State Director Tom Lonnie expressed appreciation for the contributions made by smokejumpers past and present. Alaska Fire Service Manager John Gould, a former Alaska Smokejumper, thanked the organizers of the reunion celebration before giving commemorative 'Smokejumper 50th Anniversary' coins to all smokejumpers present.

Among those attending were former smokejumpers Dan and Roy Percival. Roy was the first smokejumper to hit the ground on an Alaska fire jump in 1959. Roy brought his jump log book and shared some of its comments, including "two days without chow – lots of mosquitoes."

— continued on page 5



Dispatcher in the early days of the Alaska Fire Service. (top) Original smokejumper crew in front of their DC-3 jumpship.

Smokejumpers — continued from page 4

A late-evening raffle included the coveted prize of an original print painted and donated by former smoke-jumper Bruce Ford. Also prized was a beautifully crafted hunting bow, the “BroBow,” made from scratch by a team of current jumpers led by Doug Carroll and Gary Baumgartner. The “BroBow” was appropriately won by Peter Snow, a bush pilot, hunter and former smoke-jumper.

On Saturday, June 6, the celebration continued at the Silver Gulch Brewery in Fox with an indoor dinner party. The gathering resonated with storytelling and toasts to smokejumpers who have passed on or those unable to attend. “I haven’t talked that much in twenty years,” reflected Ed Strong, former smokejumper and former chief of fire operations at the Alaska Fire Service.



50th Anniversary smokejumper coin (front side).

The months of planning and organizing created a resounding celebration to carry forward into the next 50 years of Alaska smoke-jumper history. Crew Supervisor Robert Yeager credited many smokejumpers, notably Michael O’Brien who multi-tasked during an active fire season, with the success of the reunion. Also deserving credit is the “Old



Doug Stockdale

Alaska Fire Service Manager John Gould (far left) hands out commemorative coins as BLM-Alaska State Director Tom Lonnie (far right) looks on.

Geezer” squad (self-named) of former smokejumpers, including Ken Coe, Jack Firestone, Chip Houde, Jon Larson, Buck Nelson, Ed Strong and Steve Theisen, among others.

“The bros of past and present rose to the occasion and did a great job, standard,” said Bill Cramer, as he credited everyone who helped.

On Sunday, celebrants gathered at the jump base to say goodbye for now. It was back to business for the Alaska Smokejumpers, sending jumpers to the suit-up racks, flying off to fight wildland fires burning across Alaska.

— Mike McMillan
AFS Smokejumper

Smokejumper Memories

Between the “Old Salts” and the New



Mike McMillan

Generations of Alaska smokejumpers gather to celebrate on Friday night. (left to right) Pete Iverson, Jack Firestone, Fred Hernandez, Jon Larson, Lance Clouser, Sandra Romero, Rick Tompson and Brent Woffinden.

As Friday evening approached and the guests began to gather for the Alaska Smokejumpers’ 50th Anniversary Celebration barbeque and bonfire, the predictable cool, windy, rainstorm built up over “Grizz Pond” at the Chena Lakes Recreation Area east of Fairbanks.

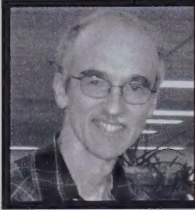
Undaunted, scores of former and current jumpers and their friends hunkered close to smoky campfires under cargo chutes suspended in the trees. Jump stories flowed, as “bros” greeted “bros,” many reconnecting for the first time in years.

I had the pleasure of sharing the company of smokejumpers and pilots with whom I had worked, and had the pleasure of meeting many who came before me. At both the Friday night barbeque and Saturday night reunion dinner at Silver Gulch Brewery, I got the sense of a feeling of gratitude from the current jumpers to the “Old Salts” for what they had done to build the Alaska Smokejumper organization. At the same time, the “Old Salts” got to meet a group of young people who are dedicated to upholding the traditions of that organization — boldness, innovation and smart, efficient firefighting.

Personally, I found myself somewhere in the middle. My jumping days are a memory, but the title of “Old Salt” is not on my resume. Still, I was very proud to rub shoulders with the legends and with the youngsters, and to be reminded of a very special time in my life.

— Chip Houde
State Aviation Manager
and former smokejumper





Journey into Alaska's Past

with BLM-Alaska Archaeologist Robert King

CONNECTING ALASKA TO THE LOWER 48

Recently, I was saddened to learn that a good friend of mine and long-time supporter of making Alaska better connected to the rest of the country passed away at his home in Connecticut. He was John Logan, age 93, a man who became a friend to many at BLM ten years ago. In the fall of 1999, representatives from the BLM State Office and Glennallen Field Office honored John by presenting him with a miniature version of an interpretive panel later installed at BLM's Sourdough Campground off the Richardson Highway. The presentation happened when John was visiting Alaska on the 60th anniversary of a remarkable trip he made in the summer of 1939—a story BLM told on the interpretive panel. (See BLM-Alaska Frontiers, Jan. 2000 issue)

Along with a colorful Alaskan "Sourdough" partner, Clyde C. "Slim" Williams (1881-1974), John Logan, then 25 years old, left Fairbanks, Alaska, in June 1939 on a motorcycle headed for the New York World's Fair. The pair's ambitious goal was to gain national publicity along the way for the need to build a road connecting Alaska to the rest of the United States. At that time, there was no such road and not even a crude trail for over 1,000 miles of the journey. Instead, they crossed wilderness terrain and rivers the best way they could, mile after long mile. For weeks there was no communication with the outside world. While the journey met with several unexpected problems and ended in Seattle in December 1939, taking four months longer than expected, it nonetheless was a success. It gained the desired publicity, spotlighting Alaska's need for an overland route to the Lower 48 states. It was a trip of a lifetime that John never forgot. Earlier in 1932-33, Slim Williams had successfully



Cover of the Feb-March 2000 Frontiers issue with John and Clyde on their motorcycles.
Photo Courtesy of Robert King.

mushed a dog-team by himself to the Chicago World's Fair for a similar purpose – gaining publicity for the construction of a road to the Lower 48.

From a larger historical perspective, John and Slim's "great adventure" journey in 1939 was but one of many attempts over many decades to make Alaska more connected to the rest of the world. The interest to better connect Alaska to the rest of the world had begun long before the 1900s in yet another way, which also involved some of the lands now managed by the BLM in Alaska.

Among the first attempts to better connect Alaska and the world was an ambitious project launched in the mid-1860s. This was while Alaska was still part of "Russian America." In 1866, the Western Union Telegraph Company began construction work in western Alaska on a telegraph line to connect Europe with North America through

Alaska. During the brutally cold winter of 1866-67, workers surveyed a portion of the proposed line and set the first telegraph poles in the vicinity of Unalakleet. This included some within lands presently managed by the BLM in the Unalakleet National Wild River corridor, although no archaeological evidence of the line has yet been found.

What prompted this extraordinary and very expensive work was the initially unsuccessful attempt to lay a trans-Atlantic telegraph cable directly connecting Europe and New York. Repeated failures forced the company to contact the Czar of Russia and gain permission to instead attempt a mostly overland telegraph connection between Europe to North America. It would pass eastward across Siberia and be submerged for about 50 miles under the Bering Sea in the Bering Strait area.

Once in Alaska, its route would include the Unalakleet area and elsewhere through "Russian America," down through Canada to the western coast of the USA. It would then tie into the transcontinental telegraph line completed across the United States by the Western Union Company in the fall of 1861. (This amazing event in 1861 caused its own "telecommunications revolution," making the Pony Express system of carrying letters by mail overland across America to the West Coast obsolete soon after it started in the spring of 1860.)

In 1867, before a full year of on-the-ground telegraph line construction was done in Alaska, the project was abandoned. The reason was that finally a successful trans-Atlantic undersea telegraph cable had been laid connecting Europe and America. Thus, going the "long way" across Asia into Alaska was now not needed. Consequently,

— continued on page 7



Alaska dropped out of the picture as a vital link in what was to be the world-wide web of that era, the “futuristic” telegraph system that amazed people of the time.

And that brings us back to today and John Logan... In the past few years, BLM archaeologists in Alaska have become involved with one of the latest attempts to better connect Alaska to the rest of the world. At times during the past few summers, they have examined first-hand the various proposed routes across BLM lands for fiber optic cables, to ensure that no damage would inadvertently be done by the new projects to the remains left from past uses of BLM land. Just as they were used in 1866-67 with the first telegraph project, and later in 1939 with John Logan and Slim Williams remarkable trip, BLM’s lands are once again involved with the goal of better connecting Alaska and the world.

The latest use of Alaska’s lands, as a path for new high-speed communications lines in the ongoing communications revolution, would be both familiar and yet unbelievable to the telegraph workers of 1866 and 1867. Similarly, John Logan, born in 1914, who lived to see this communication revolution start, could hardly believe it either.

From coming to Alaska in the 1930s at a time when no road connected it to the Lower 48, John saw amaz-



Courtesy of Robert King

John Logan (1914-2009) and his 1939 motorcycle trip partner Alaska Sourdough, Clyde C. “Slim” Williams (1881-1974), are interviewed by Alfred Millote on Sept. 15, 1939 at Telegraph Creek in British Columbia.

ing changes. Just how the lands of Alaska, including BLM-managed lands, will be used in the future cannot be known. But as an archaeologist and historian, I hope the changes inevitably to come will leave untouched the important traces of the past to help educate future generations about our lives and Alaska’s fascinating past.

—Robert King
Robert_King@blm.gov

Campbell Tract’s Trailhead has new look

If you haven’t been to the Smokejumper Trailhead in awhile, you’re in for a surprise.

The wider parking area now accommodates more vehicles and will soon be striped for more organized parking. Moose Track Trail was relocated to align with Lynx Trail, and BLM will soon add a crosswalk to the asphalt of the entrance road to provide safer crossing between the two trails. National Trails Day volunteers added finishing touches to the trailhead on June 6 by installing and painting a new fence and re-vegetating the former Moose Track Trail, spreading gravel and topsoil, and reseeding the edge of the parking lot.

The changes at Smokejumper Trailhead will accommodate the increased visitation experienced by the Campbell Tract in recent years and improve visitor safety along the BLM access road, on the trails, and at the trailhead parking area.

A Tip o’ the Hat to Trails Day 2009 volunteers

More than 125 volunteers came out to help with National Trails Day projects on June 6 at Campbell Tract and Far North Bicentennial Park.

In addition to the Smokejumper Trailhead improvements noted above, Trails Day volunteers at Campbell Tract helped spread gravel on several trail segments, brushed trails to increase visibility, planted native perennials at the Campbell Creek Science Center gardens, and watered re-vegetated areas.

After a full morning of outdoor projects, the Science Center held a National Trails Day volunteer luncheon, courtesy of the Friends of the Campbell Creek Science



Sean Carlson

National Trails Day volunteers install new fence at the Smokejumper Trailhead parking area.

Center. Volunteers also watched the release of a rehabilitated boreal owl by the Bird Treatment and Learning Center.

The BLM thanks our many volunteers and partners who made National Trails Day 2009 a success. We appreciate your continued involvement in the management of public lands at Campbell Tract.

—Teresa McPherson
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Learning About Permitting on Our Public Lands

Marnie Graham



A fishing charter client hooks a Gulkana River king (Chinook) salmon.

Have you ever:

- Taken a guided float or fishing trip on the Gulkana National Wild River or Delta National Wild, Scenic and Recreational River?
- Paid someone to take you hunting or bird watching along the Denali Highway?
- Heli-skied in Thompson Pass?
- Mushed or watched the Copper Basin 300 or Sheep Mountain 150 dog sled races?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you most likely were participating in a commercial activity on public lands that the BLM Glennallen Field Office permitted and managed. While many people enjoy federal public lands through casual use and do not need a permit, federal regulations require Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) for commercial and competitive activities on public lands.

At the BLM Glennallen Field Office, like many BLM offices across the nation, Outdoor Recreation Planner Denton Hamby processes about 35 special recreation permit applications each year for commercial use of public lands and a variety of recreational activities. He says river guides, tour operators, hunting and fishing guides, and competitive or large group events are the most common permittees. Hamby is always surprised at how few people understand the BLM’s permitting process or the advantages to having a permit.

Hamby says the permitting process helps protect our public lands for future generations. “Permits help the BLM be responsive to requests from the public for recreation services on public lands,” he explains. “It supports conservation of Alaska’s fish, wildlife and land resources. Permitting fees collected for the use of public lands go directly back into paying for trail maintenance, trash removal, permit compliance trips, and other improvements in the permit area that will benefit the public.”

The permitting process helps the agency manage visitor use, public health and safety, natural and cultural resources, and makes sure the public receives a fair monetary return for some recreation uses of BLM-managed public lands. “Authorized commercial operators are required to have the highest of qualifications and carry insurance to receive their permits,” Hamby says. “The operators can offer the public unforgettable adventures, and by following guidelines and stipulations in the permits, they demonstrate a commitment to public land stewardship by keeping their use areas clean and pristine for future use.”

A list of guides, vendors, and events permitted by the BLM Glennallen Field Office are posted at campgrounds and are available at the local offices. For other areas, check with your local BLM offices on permit requirements.

— Marnie Graham
marnie_graham@blm.gov

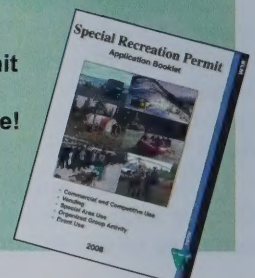
Recreation Permits

There are five types of recreational uses that require a Special Recreation Permit for use of federal public land:

- 1. Commercial Use (for profit):** Recreational use of public lands for business or financial gain. When any person or group/organization will profit, advertise for participants, collect a fee, or receive money from participants in recreational activities on public lands, this is commercial use.
- 2. Competitive Use:** Use, events, or activities on public lands involving two or more contestants competing and when either of the following apply:
 - a) Participants register, enter or complete an application for the event.
 - b) Users designate a predetermined course or area.
- 3. Vending:** Selling goods (such as food, clothing, souvenirs) or services on public lands in conjunction with a special event or recreation activities.
- 4. Special Use Area:** Some individual (private, noncommercial) recreation uses require permits in Special Areas, such as the National Trails System, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, the National Wilderness System, National Conservation Areas, Monuments and Recreation areas.
- 5. Organized Group Activity and Event Use:** Noncommercial and noncompetitive group activities and recreation events, such as large Scout camp-outs or a large family reunion may require permits to reduce conflicts between large groups and other users.

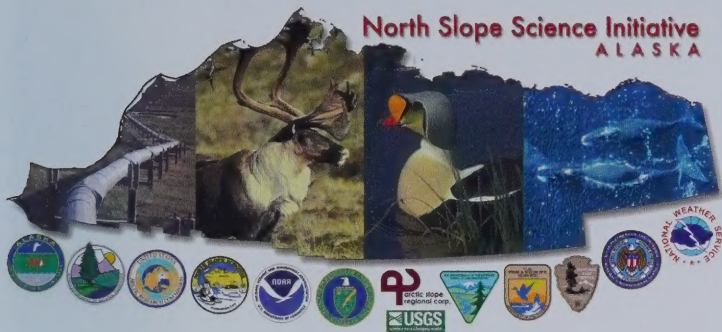
http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/recreation/permitted_commercial.html

The Special Recreation Permit Application Booklet is on-line!



FRONTIERS *Flashes*

News from around Alaska



North Slope Science Initiative (NSSI) Oversight Group Welcomes New Chair

Karla Kolash, Special Assistant to the North Slope Borough Mayor, will serve as the new Chair for the NSSI's Oversight Group. When Kolash begins as Chair on July 1, she will be the first local government Chair since the group was formed under the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The Oversight Group directs the activities of the NSSI and is made up of federal, state, and Borough land managers. <http://www.northslope.org>.

Birds of a Feather

On May 21, sixty-five "friends" attended the second annual Friends of the Campbell Creek Science Center membership event. The theme of the evening was "Birds of a Feather!" Guests enjoyed an evening of live Celtic music by local musicians and educational activities that included indoor bird games and guided outdoor bird walks led by Science Center staff.

The Friends of the Campbell Creek Science Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the educational programs of the Science Center. This year, the Friends group has received over \$13,000 in donations to help economically disadvantaged students attend outdoor learning programs at the Science Center. Information on Science Center programs and a link to the Friends site is available at <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sciencecenter.html>.



Jennifer Fox



John F Payne

Karla Kolash

Atigaru Legacy Well Project

On April 28, the BLM successfully completed the Atigaru Legacy Well remediation project (see Frontiers Spring 2009 Issue 106, page 9), the agency's third BLM legacy well on the North Slope threatened by erosion and melting permafrost causing portions of this peninsula near the Beaufort Sea to sink or subside. The Native-owned contractor from Anchorage and Kaktovik, Marsh Creek LLC, plugged and remediated the Atigaru Point Well #1 site, despite severe weather.

When the project began, the crew worked in extreme cold temperatures and hostile blizzard conditions. During the final days of the project, the area experienced record high temperatures over 40 degrees F, prompting a quick shut down of sea ice travel and the tundra. The contractor worked closely with representatives of the BLM Arctic Field Office to safely store their remaining equipment at the Kalikpak and Kogru sites.

More than 14,000 gallons of diesel was recovered and transported from the site to Prudhoe Bay for recycling, and the drilling muds and reserve pit contents went to the North Kalikpak Site 50 miles inland for storage. The well was cut off 10 feet below sea level to prevent it from becoming a hazard when the site erodes and is consumed by the sea.

BLM Alaska News Release Feeds

Anyone can now subscribe to an RSS BLM-Alaska News Release feed. Go to <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/rss/newsreleases/ak.html> to subscribe.



Get Outdoors this Summer!

Have you driven north across the Arctic Circle, seen caribou crossing the tundra, or tried backcountry hiking or guided river rafting?

This summer, take advantage of what BLM-Alaska offers in outdoor recreation opportunities and adventures. If you're looking for a calm lake to float, a wild whitewater river to run, or a hiking trail to discover, you can find it in Alaska.

The Campbell Creek Science Center, Arctic Interagency Visitor's Center, or Alaska Public Land Information Centers (APLICs) and BLM Public Rooms can help you identify all those flowers, birds, and wildlife you're seeing. If you're interested in history, plan a drive along the Taylor Highway through the historic Fortymile gold mining area or check out the Iditarod National Historic Trail. Looking for a remote adventure with the comfort of a cabin? Check out the White Mountains National Recreation Area for year-round adventures.

For where to go, what to do, and what you need to know, look no further than BLM-Alaska's Recreation Home Page: <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/recreation.html>.



Ruth McCoard



Pam Eldridge



Pam Eldridge



Craig McCaa

(top) Arctic Interagency Visitor Center in Coldfoot, (left) Public Information Center in Anchorage, (center right) APLIC in downtown Anchorage on Fourth Ave., (bottom right) Dalton Highway BLM Yukon Crossing Contact Station.

BLM reindeer grazing permits



Laurie Thorpe

Reindeer herd near Nome with a truck on dusty road in background.

BLM-Alaska recently changed how it issues reindeer grazing permits and has adopted a "landscape-level" approach that blends traditional knowledge with science to identify land health standards important to reindeer grazing and range management. With these changes, the BLM is authorizing 10-year permits (instead of the five-year permits issued previously) to herders, which allow them more time for planning and building herds. In return, the BLM is asking herders to develop grazing management

plans and complete brief annual reports. This approach will mean fewer renewal applications for herders, improved resource management and collaboration, and continuation of healthy rangelands.

On June 4, the *Nome Nugget* newspaper published an opinion piece about these recent changes, written jointly by the BLM Anchorage Field Office and Kawerak Reindeer Herders Association. The BLM remains committed to helping herders work toward a viable, self-sustaining reindeer industry in the region.

Volunteers work on Pinnell Mountain Trail

A group of volunteers from the American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations will be working on the Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail northeast of Fairbanks from June 21 to July 5. The 27-mile Pinnell Trail follows alpine ridges above timberline and provides views of the Yukon River and the Alaska Mountain Range. The volunteer work party, organized by the BLM, will do general trail and shelter maintenance. If you or someone you know wants to spend some time volunteering on trail work, contact Holli McClain at the Fairbanks District Office, 907-474-2378. Volunteer Vacations is a program by the American Hiking Society that gives people an opportunity to spend a week hiking or backpacking while building and maintaining trails in diverse locations across the country. For more information see: <https://americanhiking.org/volunteerVacation.aspx>.

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National Trails Day celebration featured

The Anchorage affiliates of CBS and NBC television aired stories the evening of June 6 about the joint BLM Anchorage Field Office-Municipality of Anchorage National Trails Day celebration at Campbell Tract. The Anchorage Daily News published a feature article June 7 about the event. More than 125 volunteers came out to help with National Trails Day projects on the BLM Campbell Tract and the Municipality's adjacent Far North Bicentennial Park. The Municipality of Anchorage became a "Take Pride in America City" in 2005. The Anchorage Field Office and the Municipality co-sponsor numerous successful Take Pride events each year.

BLMers helping the community



Lee Koss

BLM-Alaska employees help at the Bean's Cafe in Anchorage once a month. The cafe provides meals, day shelter and support services to Anchorage's homeless. (left to right) Mary Kenick, Elise White, Sharon Koss (daughter of BLMer Lee Koss), and Jolie Pollet.

You never know who you might bump into



Anne Rosenfeld

Alaska State Director Tom Lonnie (center) met informally with U.S. Congressman Peter King (left), ranking minority member of the House Homeland Security Committee, and Peter Schmitt (right), Minority Leader of the Nassau County (New York) Legislature, during Memorial Day activities on Long Island. Lonnie was in New York visiting family for the holiday weekend.



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BLM-ALASKA FRONTIERS... From the Managing Editor

The longer I work for BLM-Alaska, the more I realize how invaluable BLM-managed public lands and resources are. Whether you're visiting this great state or live here, there is a wealth of natural resources waiting for you to explore and experience. Although we didn't do a story on the Interior flooding this spring, we want folks to know the Fort Egbert Historical Site in Eagle is open and hosting visitors, which is helping the local economy. We're highlighting the Alaska Smokejumpers 50th anniversary celebration with smokejumpers writing their stories. Take a trip into Alaska's past with BLM Archaeologist Robert King. Learn about BLM-Alaska's land use planning. Get the latest on the Iditarod National Historic Trail Centennial, and how one of our managers is getting national recognition for "Take Pride in America" partnerships and programs. Most of all, make plans to discover new places or activities, or revisit those you have come to love. We're so very proud of what BLM-Alaska has to offer!

Thank you for your interest in *BLM-Alaska Frontiers*.

— Karen Laubenstein
karen_laubenstein@blm.gov



Teresa McPherson

The newly improved BLM Smokejumper Trailhead is ready for you!

BLM-Alaska Frontiers

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